

Swinton (Yorks.) Urban District.

HEALTH DEPARTMENT.

ANNUAL REPORTS

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

AND THE

Surveyor and Inspector,

For the Year ending 31st December, 1908.

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Swinton Urban District Council

(*Yorks.*)

MEDICAL OFFICER'S ANNUAL REPORT.

To the Chairman and Members of the Council.

Gentlemen,—

It is again my duty to present to you my Annual Report, prepared in accordance with the instructions of the Local Government Board.

THE POPULATION.

It is a difficult matter to form an estimate of the population, even at the census probably all the lodgers are not enumerated. In 1901, the Census returns gave 12,207, with an increase of 2,512 over the previous Census, but this rate of increase has not been maintained, and my estimate, to the middle of 1908, of 14,077, has an element of uncertainty about it, although probably about correct. The natural increase of 299, is larger than it has been for some years.

BIRTH RATE.

The number of births registered was 526—males 268, females 258; of these 410 were registered in the parish of Swinton and 116 in Kilnhurst, only in one other year have the number of births exceeded 500. The birth-rate per 1000 inhabitants was 37.3, 37.3 is also the average birth-rate for the last 10 years. The rate for the parish of Swinton was 36.6, and that of Kilnhurst with the hamlet of Piccadilly 40.3.

DEATH RATE.

The number of deaths registered in the district from all causes was 208—males 114, females 94; but 24 deaths registered and dying in public institutions outside the district must be added, making a total of 231, the rate of the registered deaths within the district was 14.7, and the corrected death-rate 16.3, the average corrected death-rate for the last 7 years was 16.5.

INFANT MORTALITY.—79 infants under 12 months of age—76 legitimate, and 3 illegitimate—died during the year, the rate per 1000 births being 148; this rate was so high as 201 during 1907, and the average rate for the last 10 years has been 174; the rate therefore for 1908 was a comparatively low one, though not so low as one would desire.

Out of the 78 infant deaths 25 died during the first month of life, due largely to parental or heredity causes, but those dying between 3 and 12 months were more often due to preventible causes, more especially when deaths come under the heading of diarrhœa; the result usually of a general want of cleanliness, more especially as to food, house, and surroundings. Under the heading of wasting diseases, see Table V, are many preventible deaths caused by needless artificial feeding, which is becoming much too common in coal mining districts and centres such as yours. This artificial manner of rearing babies calls for the appointment of a lady health visitor or female assistant inspector.

It is frequently urged that the rearing of infants should form one of the subjects taught in secondary schools, such teaching, however, which must be practical, strictly belongs to home life, not school life, and the scientific side of the subject can only be efficiently taught in special schools or classes. Until there is a Lady Health Visitor in the district it is useless your adopting the Early Notification of Birth Act, 1907.

ZYMOTIC DEATHS numbered 34, namely:—Scarlet Fever 5, Diphtheria 1, Measles 5, Whooping Cough 5, Diarrhœa 18. The rate per 1000 of persons living was 2.4.

SPECIAL AND NOTIFIABLE DISEASES.

The number of cases notified by medical practitioners was 97. An intimation is given in a circular letter of the Local Government Board that if you desire to extend the provisions of the Infectious Diseases (Notification) Act, 1889, to anthrax, glanders, and hydrophobia in man, the Board will be prepared to entertain the application favourably.

SMALL-POX.—No case was reported during the year.

SCARLET FEVER.—74 cases were reported, 3 in the first half, and 71 in the second half of the year; 66 cases were treated in the Joint Infectious Hospital, and 8 were fairly well isolated at home; 5 deaths occurred amongst those treated in Hospital; of those treated at home all had good recoveries.

The outbreak of the epidemic was in the centre of the district, and the disease never spread far from certain streets, namely, Station and Queen Streets, Swinton Bridge Road and William Street. Kilnhurst and Piccadilly remained perfectly free, and only a few cases were reported in the Roman Terrace district. The type of disease was mild in character, two or three of those dying were not in an healthy state before they were attacked.

The INTRODUCTION of the disease was no doubt from the neighbouring districts, a school-child in Queen Street, and one or two infants in Charles Street and Temperance Terrace were the starting points; but, apparently, fresh introductions also kept taking place from time to time.

The CAUSE of the spread, chiefly through visiting houses where cases had occurred; hence friends and relatives of the patients were usually the next sufferers. "Missed" cases—that is, slight, unrecognised cases, also played their part in spreading the disease; there was evidence that "carriers"—that is, persons holding the infection about their person, although not suffering themselves from the disease—infected some cases. There were at least two "return" cases—that is, cases returning from Hospital with some slight ear or nasal discharge, infecting someone on their return home. My experience is that the cause of these cases is through the convalescent patient on his return home sharing a bed with a susceptible person. The recrudescence of one case was the cause of its being sent to Hospital twice within a few months, and one child a fortnight after her return from Hospital developed a feverish cold, and at the same time her sister shared her bed, with the result that the sister, after the usual interval of three days, commencing with symptoms of Scarlet Fever.

Although several school children suffered during the epidemic, it could never be said that any one school was the centre of the infection. The milk supply was apparently free from all blame, although I had to take carefully into consideration whether a school-girl should assist in the evening milk rounds. Fortunately, with two or three exceptions, overcrowding in houses where the disease broke out was not a special insanitary feature; in one house, however, where there was much overcrowding, five

members of the family suffering, in spite of removals to Hospital and careful disinfection. The following preventive measures were made use of: Hospital isolation, disinfection of sick rooms with formalin, exclusion of children from school, spraying of school cloak-rooms. My own verbal instructions in every case—the prevention of any child returning to school until at least 14 days had elapsed after discharge from Hospital, the prevention of overcrowding. The result was that in a very few houses a second case occurred, and that usually after a long interval.

I recommend that the 14 days interval between discharge from Hospital and returning to school be extended to one month; that printed instructions be given to every patient on leaving Hospital, to sleep alone for two months; that arrangements be made for the steam disinfection of bedding and clothing.

PUERPERAL FEVER.—Two cases were reported of child-bed fever; one proved fatal. The midwives of the district are of the old-fashioned type. I believe they perform their duties fairly satisfactorily.

MEASLES.—A small epidemic broke out in the Roman Terrace district, amongst infants; many were not attended by medical men.

TYPHOID FEVER, or Enteric.—Three cases were reported; all recovered; only one of the three was a severe case; he had received the infection outside the district.

TUBERCULOSIS.—Fourteen deaths from Consumption and seven from other tubercular diseases were registered. The death rate during the last two years has been above the average. At present I do not know of a single advanced case in the whole district. It is to be observed that, under the Public Health—Tuberculosis—Regulations, 1908, all cases of Consumption occurring amongst persons in receipt of poor-law relief must be notified to your Medical Officer of Health. In all cases of death from Consumption precautions have been taken to prevent the spread of the disease. At present you have no special hospital accommodation for Consumption. The building used by the Joint Hospital Board for Smallpox could be frequently used for the purpose, or the Council's premises on the Common, by the addition of a chalet, could, during the summer, be made at a small expense, into a suitable place to receive either early or advanced cases,

THE HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES is improving; but through lack of houses there is still a considerable amount of overcrowding. Several backyards have been made fairly sanitary, and two or three damp houses improved during the year. I would call your attention to the condition of the privy middens throughout the district, during the hot weather. Few can be classed as sanitary; some are nuisances obvious to every one. For instance, a block close to back-to-back houses in Foundry Yard, or those close to old dwellings in Fitzwilliam Street. Others will be found to be badly ventilated, without light, or otherwise defective, or there is insufficient accommodation. I recommend that wherever structural conditions are bad, a specially drawn up notice be sent to the owner, pointing out on a schedule the defects, and asking him what steps he proposes to take to remedy the conditions forthwith. So important a subject as regards the health of your district calls for considerable thought. I have, therefore, written as follows on

DOMESTIC CONVENIENCES.

During every year a number of old insanitary privy-middens are rebuilt on what seems to be a better principle; but, nevertheless, they are a nuisance in hot weather, at all times more or less uncomfortable, and take up too much room in back yards. As to a large number, they are, without doubt, whether old or new, frequently a direct cause of diarrhoea diseases, and help to swell the zymotic and infant death-rates, and should be abolished throughout the district. If water-closets do not take their place, then the small ash-closet should be introduced, which is the next best form in a colliery district where the water supply is not plentiful. That the privy midden should be improved out of existence may be read year after year in the reports of the West Riding Medical Officer of Health.

THE ASH CLOSET.

This closet is on the ordinary earth-closet principle, and is now rapidly replacing all privy middens in the large colliery centres of the county of Durham. The Durham County Medical Officer, in writing on privy-middens, says: "In many districts a marked decline in total zymotic and infant death-rates has followed the abolition of the privy-midden in favour of earth-closets"; and again, "the abolition of the midden-privy is the greatest sanitary improvement which can be effected." An ash-closet should be provided to every house in the district wherever there is no water-closet; it should be so situated as to be convenient for cleansing, and as little unsightly as possible; if situated on sloping ground

an inside or steps up to the door are not required. It must be systematically ventilated, the outlets and inlets being so placed that the current of air is drawn up from under the seat by means of ventilating pipes or by a cavity wall, terminating in a chimney; an air-inlet under the door, and an outlet by means of air-bricks, may be added if thought necessary. Every closet should be lighted by a glass tile or otherwise. A hinged seat permits the fæcal matter to be covered by the ashes. The receptacle under the seat consists of a dished concrete floor, with a flag riser in front, and a strong iron or wood door behind, fastened by a key. A capacity of 12 cubic feet only is desirable, but for practical purposes, in a colliery district, Inspectors prefer 27 cubic feet. Ash-closets, as indeed all closets where there is not water carriage, require a considerable amount of inspection, or else, either tenants will empty slop-water into them, or contractors will fail to keep the terms of their contracts, and thus the great benefits as regards health will be lost. I recommend that no new closet be erected in the district except water or ash-closet, and that the present privy-middens be converted as rapidly as possible into either one or the other.

WATER SUPPLY.

It has been one of my annual duties to complain of the shortage of water; it is therefore a relief to be able to record that during 1908 there was a 24-hours supply until the middle of November. The water has been good in quality without any plumbo-solvent action; the same may be said of your new well, which you hope will be ready for use before next summer.

MILK SUPPLY.

About 200 gallons is produced daily in the district, and probably nearly as much is imported. The supply is not as clean as it should be.

The Council's water supplies all the sheds but four, which have private wells.

Since the Council made regulations, eight years ago, the construction of the buildings has improved gradually, but they are still far from perfect, and their surroundings remain in an insanitary state. The cows are apparently healthy, but many, during the winter, become plastered with filth.

I find, without much difficulty, by making use of minute but quite inexpensive precautions, milk will remain pure 24 hours after a journey of eight miles, even in hot weather; but house-

holders must not expect good milk if they do not take precautions themselves, and do not insist on having clean milk from the cow-keepers and dairies. Small cow-keepers would probably do better if they milked in the open field during the summer.

Other foods besides milk require much inspection. No diseased meat was reported during the year, and no action taken under the Sale of Food and Drugs Act, nor under section 117 of Public Health Act, 1875.

SCHOOLS.

All the schools are supplied from the Council's water-works, and no complaint has been made as to the supply of water. A better position should be found for some of the Roman Terrace School water-closets. The ventilation of the Kilnhurst National School is still not perfect.

A whole-time School Medical Officer, under the Code of Regulations for Public Elementary Schools, 1908, carries out the inspection of school children under the County Council. From a sanitary point of view, this officer should be more in touch with the local Sanitary Authority than he has been during the year.

FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS ACT, 1901.

There are 29 Workshops on the register. A few hands only are employed in each. Ventilation has been improved in one or two cases.

Section 22 of the Public Health Acts (Amendment) Act, 1890, is in force in the district. Factories or Workshops, where females are employed or in attendance, are required to have one sanitary convenience for every 25, and the same for men.

The sanitary condition of the two Bake-houses is satisfactory. They are both above ground.

INSPECTIONS.

I have frequently made inspections of the district, with the assistance of the Inspector of Nuisances. The Inspector's report is appended.

I am, gentlemen,

Yours obediently,

EDGAR ENGLISH, M.D.

Feb. 12th, 1909.

TABLE III.

SHOWING THE NUMBER OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES NOTIFIED DURING THE YEAR 1908, AT SUBJOINED AGES.

Notifiable Diseases.	At all ages.	Under 1 year.	1-5.	5-15.	15-25.	25-65.	65 and upwards.
Small Pox	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Cholera	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Diphtheria	9	...	1	5	...	3	...
Erysipelas	9	...	1	1	...	7	...
Scarlet Fever... ..	74	...	16	56	1	1	...
Typhoid or Enteric Fever	3	...	...	1	...	2	...
Puerperal Fever ...	2	...	...	...	...	2	...
Plague... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

TABLE IV.

SHEWING THE NUMBER OF REGISTERED
CAUSES OF DEATH OCCURRING DURING
1908, AT SUBJOINED AGES.

Cause of Death.	All Ages	Under 1 year.	1 and under 5.	5-15.	15-25.	25-65.	65 and upwards.
Small Pox	0	...	...	...	...	...	...
Measles	5	...	5	...	...	...	...
Scarlet Fever... ..	5	...	2	3	...	...	...
Whooping Cough	5	4	1	...	...	...	...
Diphtheria	1	...	1	...	...	...	...
Typhoid or Enteric	0	...	...	...	...	...	...
Epidemic Influenza	0	...	...	...	...	...	...
Enteritis	4	...	3	...	...	1	...
Diarrhœa	18	17	1	...	...	...	...
Puerperal Fever	1	...	...	...	...	1	...
Erysipelas	0	...	...	...	...	...	...
Phthisis	14	...	3	...	2	9	...
Other Tubercular Diseases	7	1	5	...	...	1	...
Cancer... ..	11	...	...	...	...	9	2
Bronchitis	15	2	2	...	...	2	9
Pneumonia	13	5	3	1	1	2	1
Other Diseases of Lungs	1	1	...	...	...	...	...
Alcoholism	0	...	...	...	...	...	...
Premature Birth	12	12	...	...	...	...	...
Heart Diseases	13	...	...	1	2	4	6
Accidents	7	...	...	3	3	1	...
Suicides	1	...	...	...	...	...	1
Parturition	1	...	...	...	...	1	...
All other causes	96	37	7	3	2	16	31

TABLE V.

Infantile Mortality during the year 1908.

Deaths from stated causes in Weeks and Months under One Year of Age.

Causes of Death.	Total Deaths under 1 year.																
	Under 1 week.	1-2 weeks.	2-3 weeks.	3-4 weeks.	Total under 1 month.	1-2 months.	2-3 months.	3-4 months.	4-5 months.	5-6 months.	6-7 months.	7-8 months.	8-9 months.	9-10 months.	10-11 months.	11-12 months.	
All Causes. (Certified .. (Uncertified ..)	18 ...		2 ...	5 ..	25 0	6 1	5 ..	5 ..	7 2	7 ..	5 ..	2 ..	4 ..	4 ..	5 ..	1 ..	76 3
Common Infectious Disease—																	
Whooping Cough	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	1	1	...	...	...	1	1	...	4
Diarrhoea, all forms..	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	3	5	4	1	...	1	2	1	...	18
Wasting Diseases—																	
Premature Birth	11	...	...	1	12	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	12
Congenital Defects...	1	...	...	...	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
Injury at Birth ..	1	...	...	...	1	2	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Want of Breast Milk	3	...	1	1	5	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	8
Atrophy, Debility,) Marasmus)	1	...	...	...	1	...	1	1	2	...	...	1	1	...	1	...	8
Tuberculous Diseases	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1
Meningitis, not Tuberculous	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Convulsions ...	...	...	1	1	2	1	...	...	1	1	4	1	2	1	...	...	13
Bronchitis ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	2	...	2
Pneumonia ..	...	...	...	...	...	2	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	6
Suffocation, overlaying	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	0
Other Causes	1	...	...	1	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3
	14	..	2	5	25	7	5	5	9	7	5	2	4	4	5	1	79

Births in the year: Legitimate, 505; Illegitimate, 21. Deaths in the year: Legitimate, 76; Illegitimate, 3.

Swinton Urban District Council.

SURVEYOR AND INSPECTOR'S

REPORT.

To the Chairman and Members of the Council.

Gentlemen,—

I beg to submit the following Report on the work done by the Highways, Water, Lighting and Health Committees for the year ending December 31st, 1908.

HIGHWAYS.

The lengths of the roads in the district are:—

	Miles.	Furlongs.	Yards.
County Main Roads	4	1	50
Other Roads repairable by the Council	6	2	38
(Corrected.)			
Private Streets (undedicated)	2	2	144

The main roads have, as usual, been kept in a condition satisfactory to the County Surveyor, and the cost incurred by the Council has been allowed.

Early on in the season the County Surveyor complained of the quality of some of the slag, and the order was withdrawn and placed with another firm.

Such furnace slag as we are able to obtain will not withstand the heavy traffic, and it would be more economical to get a larger quantity of granite for the principal roads and use furnace slag on secondary roads only.

The total quantity of granite for the year was 342 tons, and 680 tons of furnace slag.

The carriage-way at the top of Roman Terrace has been widened, and kerb and channel fixed on the north side.

If a strip of land could be acquired of the owner, and the wall set back say six feet for a footpath, it would complete a much-needed improvement.

FOOTPATHS.

The cost of repairing asphalt footpaths, of which there are nearly five miles, is increasing year by year.

Trial lengths of concrete flags have been laid in Queen Street and Wath Road, which make a superior pavement to asphalt, and will, I have no doubt, prove more economical on our paths, which are subject to such hard wear.

TRAMWAYS.

During the year the Surface-Contact System was condemned, owing to the danger from the live studs, and was superseded by the Overhead Trolley equipment, which was finally approved on 19th December last.

NEW ROAD FROM SWINTON TO KILNHURST.

Several meetings have been held to consider the question of a new thoroughfare from Swinton to Kilnhurst, and the site inspected by the Highways Committee and Mr. Talbot (Lord Fitzwilliam's Agent).

The time is ripe for the construction of the road, and it is hoped that the Council will persevere until their object is attained.

WATER SUPPLY.

The water problem at Swinton has been a difficult one; at present there is a shortage in the supply.

The Council, after having tried various means to increase the supply at the existing works by driving headings, etc., came to the conclusion that there was very little likelihood of getting more water than what they were doing from that source; they therefore decided to go in for a new scheme, from which they expect to obtain sufficient water to give (along with existing sources) an adequate supply to the town for some years to come.

From the establishment of the Water Works up to the end of the year 1894, the average quantity pumped into the mains was 33 million gallons per annum.

During the past ten years the quantity has averaged 60 million gallons per annum.

Population supplied 31st December, 1894, was 9,805; and the population supplied 31st December, 1908, was 13,465. To allow 14 gallons per head per day there is at present a deficiency of 8,806,150 gallons per annum.

The scheme in hand at Birdwell Flats is estimated to yield 24,000,000 gallons per annum, and there is every prospect of that amount being exceeded, and which may be still further increased by tapping other springs higher up the valley.

PROGRESS OF BIRDWELL FLATS SCHEME.

March, 1907.—Surveyor's report on the site and estimated cost of the scheme were read, and the Water Committee viewed the site.

April, 1907.—The Scheme was adopted by the Council.

May 15th, 1907.—Colonel Charlesworth's Surveyor and Solicitor viewed the site.

October 30th, 1907.—Colonel Charlesworth's offer of a site at 1/6 per square yard, including a right to drive a heading, was accepted.

January 29th, 1908.—Contract let to J. T. Barnes, to sink a well 60 feet deep, and bore a further 30 feet.

The work was commenced on March 4th, and completed on July 17th.

October 28th.—A contract was let to J. Pennington, to drive a heading and lay pipes, and the work was commenced on January 22nd, 1909.

NOTES FROM WATER STATISTICS.

The estimated population supplied to the end of December, 1908, is 13,465.

Number of houses supplied ... 2693

„ Trades by meter ... 29

„ Schools by meter ... 7

„ Gardens by meter ... 1

„ Cricket Clubs by meter 2

„ Butchers by meter... 1

40 meters in use.

During the year, supply has been laid on to 17 houses—nine new houses and eight old ones; six of the old houses are supplied from the High-level Tank.

The quantity of water pumped into the mains was 64,469,225 gallons; this equals 176,875 gallons per day, and 13.17 gallons per head per day, including domestic and trade supply.

The quantity of water used for trade purposes (not including schools) was 1,560,000 gallons; this equals 0.31 gallons per head per day, which brings the consumption per head per day for domestic purposes to 12.86 gallons. 248 tons of coal cost £141 6s. 0d., and the wages amounted to £279 5s. 1d.; these two items equalling a cost of 1.56 pence per 1000 gallons of water pumped.

Owing to the increased price of coal (from 7/6 to 10/- per ton) the cost is 0.13 pence per 1000 gallons more than the previous year.

Eight standard taps have been done away with, and water has been laid on to the sinks of 91 houses.

No new mains were laid. We have now 95 fixed baths, 257 water closets, 114 automatic flush closets, and four urinals.

RAINFALL.

The rainfall for the year was 21.25 inches, which fell on 185 days. Greatest fall in 24 hours was 0.83 inches, on August 20th. The average rainfall in Swinton for seven years is 22.51 inches, and the average number of rain days per annum 184. Average mean (air) temperature 48.08.

PUBLIC LIGHTING.

In July last a revised table for public lighting was adopted and submitted to the Tramways Company, and the Swinton Gas Company, as to the further charge for lighting the street lamps all the year round.

The Gas Company's offer was considered too high, and the old lighting table was adhered to.

The Tramways Company's offer to light the lamps on the tram route throughout the year at £1 11s. 6d. per lamp was accepted.

These lamps will now be lighted 365 nights for the sum of 1/6 per lamp more than was paid for lighting on 239 nights, according to the old table.

Old table, the number of hours was 2,640.

New table, the number of hours is 2,682.

Perhaps the question may be brought up again, because lighting by the old table is so wasteful.

Two new lamps were fixed during the year, the total number of street lamps now being 235.

Fixing a lamp at the end of the road leading to the back of Killeens Row is, I consider, a step in the right direction, which might with advantage be extended to several similar yards and places.

Along with neighbouring authorities, the Council made joint representation to the Doncaster Rural District Council, pressing upon them the necessity for lighting that portion of Wath Road in the parish of Adwick-on-Deane lying between the Eastern boundary of Wath District and Roman Terrace. The Doncaster Rural District Council, however, declined to light that road.

ADWICK SEWAGE.

In the year 1905 the Rural District Council of Doncaster requested this Council to allow (under the supervision of the Swinton Council's Surveyor) a sewer proposed to be laid by owners of property in the parish of Adwick-upon-Deane, in the rural district of Doncaster, to communicate with the sewer in Wath Road.

Subject to the approval of the Local Government Board, the Swinton Council granted to the Doncaster Rural Council, from October 1st, 1904, a licence and permission for the sewage of the houses and other premises erected, and to be erected, at Roman Ridge, in the parish of Adwick, to pass into the said sewer of the Swinton Council, subject (inter alia) to the following conditions:—

1. The Doncaster Council will not cause or permit any surface water, sand, or silt, from the said parish, either directly or indirectly, to flow into the sewer of the Swinton Council.
2. The Doncaster Council shall not permit any trade refuse or other effluent than domestic sewage to be discharged into the said sewer of the Swinton Council.

Provided that the Doncaster Council is not guilty of any breach of any of the covenants and agreements, the license holds good for a period of four years at the least.

On October 30th, 1907, I reported to the Council that for some considerable time no notice had been sent or given in any way when new sewers and drains were laid at Roman Ridge in the Parish of Adwick, consequently I had not had the opportunity of supervising, and could not tell how the pipes were laid nor what liquid was turned into the Council's sewer, whereupon Mr. Bower moved that the agreement with the Rural District Council of Doncaster be produced and read at the November meeting of the Council.

Evidently the Council did not recognise the importance of the matter because the agreement was not read, and the subject was dismissed without discussion.

Seventy-six houses have now been erected, seventy-four of which are occupied, and the drains connected to the Swinton Council's sewer.

SEWERS.

Some flooding of cellars has been caused by a sewer at Piccadilly, through the sewer not having sufficient fall.

To abate this nuisance it has been decided to take up and relay about 175 lineal yards of the sewer at a greater depth, so as to give it a proper fall.

The sewer, which runs along the valley to Kilnhurst, has been blocked three times during the year near to the Chemical Works. This is chiefly caused through a faulty connection, the drainage from the works not entering the sewer at a proper angle. That, however, can be remedied when the Company are making alterations in their method of treatment of waste liquor.

URINALS.

A new public urinal has been erected in Church Street, opposite the end of Thomas Street.

SEWAGE DISPOSAL WORKS.

Mr. Beckett's offer of 17 acres of land in April, 1907, for the sum of £814, was accepted subject to the approval of the Local Government Board, and in the following month I was instructed to take the levels of the land and prepare a plan and estimate of the cost of laying out the land and to report generally on the matter.

In July I reported that from long, practical experience, and from information I had gathered from visiting other sewage disposal works, I was quite satisfied:

1. That it is practicable to purify the sewage of Swinton to any degree required, either by artificial filters, or land treatment.
2. That in the treatment of sewage by artificial filters, the most common cause of failure is the insufficient size of filters.
3. That percolating filters are not always satisfactory, and that defects in automatic revolving distributors, arising from wind, frost, snow, etc., were reported to me.

4. That it would require upwards of an acre of artificial filters to satisfactorily purify the sewage of Swinton.

Suitable filtering material could only be obtained at a high cost, and the filters would cost at least £7,000. To that must be added the remodelling of the works at a further cost of £2,000, making a total capital outlay of £9,000.

To get good results the drains of the filters must be constructed and maintained in perfect condition.

The construction of the filters would be an easy matter; but to keep them in proper working order would be difficult and costly where the ground is constantly subsiding in the manner in which it is doing at your outfall works.

On the other hand, the Council were already owners of land for disposal of sludge sufficient to last 50 years. Therefore, there is no difficulty in that respect; and the 17 acres of land offered to the Council is particularly well suited for sewage irrigation purposes.

A scheme of land treatment was, therefore, prepared, and the Council unanimously resolved that the plans for additions to the sewage outfall works submitted by me be approved, and the Clerk was instructed to make application to the Local Government Board for sanction to a loan of £1,600 for the purchase of 17 acres of land, and also for the cost of carrying out the works in accordance with my estimate.

Subsequently, a sub-committee of the Council, for the purposes of inquiry, visited certain outfall works, and the report to the Council was strongly against the adoption of artificial filters, and in favour of a land irrigation scheme.

On November 8th, 1907, an Inspector of the Local Government Board held an inquiry at Swinton into the subject-matter of the Council's application for the loan, and on January 28th, 1908, a letter was received from the Local Government Board, pointing out that the scheme did not suitably meet the requirements of the case, and invited the Council to submit a scheme for remodelling the whole of the present arrangements for treating and disposing of the sewage of the district.

The Local Government Board also referred to the fact that considerable difficulty in treating the sewage was caused by the presence of a large amount of waste liquid from Chemical Works in the district, and suggested that the Council should endeavour to secure some treatment of this waste by the manufacturer before it is discharged into the sewers.

Further to state, that the Board considered that the overflow—on to the land—from the receiving well, should be closed.

I do not understand why the latter suggestion was made, because that overflow pipe is specially provided to prevent flooding of low-lying property, in case there should be a stoppage of the pumping machinery.

After some correspondence, the Local Government Board sanctioned the borrowing of £850 for the purchase of the land, the purchase money to be repaid in 50 years.

Subsequently the Council fully considered the relative merits of the two schemes, and came to the unanimous conclusion that it would be wise in the interests of the ratepayers to adopt the scheme of land treatment in preference to artificial filters, as it would cost from £250 to £300 less per annum, and be the most reliable scheme for treating and disposing of the sewage.

Instructions were given to proceed with the scheme at once, and on receipt of an enquiry from the Local Government Board, in September, asking what the Council were doing in matter, we were able to state, in reply, that the work was nearly completed, therefore the Council would not now require the remainder of the loan which was applied for; also that Dr. Maclean Wilson, Chief Inspector of the West Riding Rivers' Board, had inspected the new works and expressed his satisfaction therewith, stating that, under the circumstances, he thought the Council had done quite the right thing in adopting the scheme. With regard to the suggestion that the manufacturers should satisfactorily treat the waste liquid from the Chemical Works before it was discharged into the sewers, the Council had, for a considerable time, been endeavouring to get them to do this, with a probability of success before long.

Briefly, the scheme consists of intake channel, a series of six settling tanks, and distributing conduit, the whole being constructed of earthen embankments.

Each tank, working in turn for one week, is then emptied, the sewage is syphoned out, and runs on to the land, the sludge being left in the tank to dry, which usually takes seven or eight days in the winter and from two to three days in the summer.

The tank bottom is made to slope, and when the sludge is spadable, a cart is taken into the tank and the sludge is filled and carted to the tip.

The working is very simple, economical, and effective.

Since August last, when the tanks were put in use, upwards of 100,000 gallons of sewage has passed through them daily and irrigated on five-and-a-half acres of the new land, and are capable of treating considerably more than that amount.

The number of tanks, if at any time required, could be increased at a trifling cost.

CHEMICAL WASTE LIQUOR.

The question of effluent from the Chemical Works has been a bone of contention for close upon twenty years, fortunately, so far, without resorting to litigation.

There is now a prospect of something being done by the manufacturers to remedy this evil. They have cleared a site and have promised to erect, with all speed, a new plant for the treatment of their waste liquid, and render it less harmful to crops and bacteria beds, before it is discharged into the sewer.

SANITARY.

The inspection of the district has been made systematically throughout the year.

Nine new houses have been built, and one building lately used as a granary has been converted into a cottage; they are all through houses, substantially built, and the yards have been paved in accordance with the bye-laws.

One house was pulled down, which makes the net increase in the number of houses nine.

The building of houses does not keep pace with the increase of population, and overcrowding appears to be on the increase.

The old Canal Tavern has been demolished and a modern hotel built on the site.

Additions to the Red House have been made, the old conveniences abolished, and new water closets built, also new stables.

Additional accommodation has been provided to houses where found insufficient. These include five privies, two ashpits, and two water closets. Twenty-six privies and twelve ashpits have been taken down and rebuilt on modern lines.

Thirteen back yards have been paved with 940 square yards of asphalt, 1000 square yards brick paved, and 186 square yards paved with concrete flags, making a total of 2,126 square yards.

One hundred and ninety official notices have been served for the abatement of nuisances, which included thirty-six for blocked drains, eleven for defective sink pipes, eight for defective gully traps, twelve for insanitary back-yards, twenty-eight for defective privies and ashpits, three for defective cowsheds, thirteen defective drains, seven ashpits with doors off, two broken rain-water pipes, three cases of overcrowding, seven insufficient privy accommodation, six blocked water closets, two defective urinals, one damp house, and fifty-one miscellaneous.

Of the above, 170 have been remedied, and 20 are in hand.

SCAVENGING.

There have been 6,841 loads of ashpit and general refuse dealt with during the year, exceeding last year's total by 403 loads.

Most of the refuse has been tipped in places provided by the Council, and the remainder deposited on land where required by the farmers. No complaints have arisen from the tipping of the refuse.

With the exception of the last month, when two of the contractors allowed the work to get behind-hand, the scavenging has been done much better, the ashpits emptied oftener, more regularly, and with fewer complaints.

COWSHEDS AND DAIRIES.

There are twelve cowsheds and fourteen dairies and milk purveyors in the district, most of which have been fairly well kept by the tenants.

Complaints have been made of defects in lighting, bad floors, and drainage, and accumulation of manure.

The cause of complaint, except in one case, has been removed. In one case the defects complained of have only been partly remedied, but the owner has promised to complete the necessary alterations later on, when the cows are turned out to grass.

WORKSHOPS.

We have 29 workshops on the registers, three have been closed and two new ones opened. The ventilation of some of the workshops has been improved.

There is no over-crowding, and no defects of any particular importance were met with.

SLAUGHTER HOUSES.

The custom of throwing slaughter house refuse on the manure heap has not quite ceased.

Seven cases were discovered—two more than the previous year. Those butchers who have not already done so should be compelled to provide proper receptacles for the refuse, and have it removed from the premises at least once in every twenty-four hours, in accordance with the bye-laws. There are thirteen registered and three licensed Slaughter Houses on the register, one being added during the year.

BAKEHOUSES.

The two bakehouses are kept clean and in good order.

SMOKE NUISANCE.

A recommendation that the Council should adopt some limits with regard to the black smoke nuisance, quickly brought a petition from manufacturers in the district asking the Council not to put any restrictions on manufacturers, assuring the Council that they do all in their power to send out as little black smoke as possible.

It is almost invariably found that the cause of smoke nuisance is owing to one boiler being required to do the work of two. To generate steam combustion must be forced ; result—excessive smoke.

The greatest sufferers from air pollution are the poor people who are compelled to live in the districts where the large works are situated. The poor people's health should be considered, for it is wealth their only capital ; and if our knowledge is not adequate to prevent the smoke nuisance altogether a great deal can be done to abate it, and the three chief means to that end are plenty of boiler space, good fuel, and careful firing.

Last year, your Medical Officer of Health recommended that Part 3 of the Public Health Acts Amendment Act, 1907, be adopted.

The Act is divided into ten parts. It is made up of Clauses which have been included in Private Acts obtained by various local authorities during recent years.

I hope to have the opportunity, later on, of referring to the Act, as it contains many useful clauses which might with advantage be adopted by the Council.

I am,

Your Obedient Servant,

R. FOWLER.

27th January, 1909.

